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Mark Twain Dead, Nation Mourns Humorist

At Redding, Connecticut, on last week Thursday, two immortal American children became orphans. Mark Twain is dead, and "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn" are fatherless. The kindly humorist spirit that for twenty years has led the boys and girls of America and England on joyous pilgrimages along the Mississippi and by its charm has turned the caves and fastness of that turbid stream into places of delightful romance and mystery, set forth upon its long, last journey, all alone. The parting came as quietly as Mark Twain's own quiet smile. Just before the spirit slipped away, dawned upon the tired body, consciousness, then came reverie and finally, as softly as the falling of a curtain, death.

A nation, yea, more than a nation, a civilized world mourns the passing of the lovable Samuel Langhorne Clemens—Mark Twain. There are now no jests in the things said of the man whose jests have caused so many smiles and helped to banish so much care and whose writings have done so much to uplift humanity. The humorist has a place in this world and Mark Twain filled well the place to be occupied. Mark Twain was more than a humorist, he could be terribly in earnest. Mark Twain will be missed, for it is said of him, "Whatever he was, jester, satirist, novelist or reformer, he has left us a life honestly and usefully lived, and of a most genial and lovable personality."

The mere chronology of Mark Twain's life is briefly told. Like most dwellers in imagination, his significance to posterity lies not, as with men of action, in how he wrought upon events, but rather how events wrought upon him for from such reaction his imaginative output, one of the most considerable of his time and as it seems one the surest.

Briefly, Mark Twain was born Samuel Langhorne Clemens in Florida, Mo., on November 30, 1835. "My parents," he writes in his own Burlesque Autobiography "were neither very pious or conspicuously honest." The earliest ancestor the Twains have any record of, was a friend of the family by the name of Higgins.

The country chronicles have it that the elder Clemens failed in business and died leaving his son Samuel the ample world to make a fortune in. Attention is called to a coincidence and to the curious fact that Mark Twain's life was almost exactly coincident with the period of Halley's comet.

When we recall Mark Twain was born November 20, 1835, last perihelion of Halley comet November 16, 1835, Mark Twain died April 21, 1910, perihelion of Halley's comet, April 20, 1910.

Indeed serious appreciation of Mark Twain as an artist and not amere jokesmith began abroad but his true worth has long been recognized in this country. "Mark Twain's humor" said William Dean Howells, "will live forever." He portrays and interprets real types not only with exquisite appreciation and sympathy, but with a force and truth of drawing that makes them permanent. He had the true humorists tender heart, and deep seriousness. Like Bret Harte, with whom he worked, the great west that bred him his most audacious sallies were terse and sternly grave.

As moralist, love of humanity hatred of sham, and the sense of duty informed his most ironic and debonair preachment.

Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) was married to Olivia L. Langdon, of Elmira, New York, 1871, and to this union four children were born, of two a son and a daughter died early. One other daughter, Jean, who had been an invalid for life, met a tragic death last fall in her home at Redding, Conn. Her death greatly saddened her father, who declined in health from that moment. A third daughter, Clara, is Mrs. Ossip Gabrilovitch, wife of a pianist to whom she was married only last fall.

Mark Twain's first book was the "Jumping Frog." His best known is the "Innocence Abroad." His surest title to fame is generally believed to be "Tom Sawyer" and its companion volume, the adventures of "Huckleberry Finn." In all his books, he had a sale of more than 500,000 copies and were translated into six languages. Others among the better known are "A Tramp Abroad," "The Prince and the Pauper," "A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur," "Puddinghead Wilson," (dramatized) "Joan of Arc" "A Doublebarrelled Detective Story" and "Eve's Diary" a portion of which appeared serially.

Census Takers Now at Work

It is now up to the good people of Canyon, and it is the only chance in another decade (ten years) in which to make an official showing of our actual number of inhabitants. Also the place this city will occupy in the government list should be of great concern to each and every citizen.

Census enumerators Haney and Daniels are busy now at work securing the names and data of the entire population of the city and it is their desire to obtain full count. The assistance of all good people is asked, and especially the women of the city are asked that no families who are temporarily away from home may be overlooked. The enumerators are proceeding systematically and are taking considerable trouble to secure the names of every man, woman and child living here April 15. After the enumerator has passed the house where you live, board or lodge and have not personally called on you, please leave a request in writing with the postmaster or any of his assistants, and you will receive a call from the enumerator. By so doing you will get your name on the rolls, and at the same time, see that your neighbor does the same, it will be a great benefit to Canyon.

County Court in Session

A regular term of county court was in session this week, Judge A. N. Henson presiding. On Monday the case of U. S. Guber et al vs W. W. Thompson, a suit for commissions on sale of lands was called for trial and plaintiff took a nonsuit.

The case of Bertha Thomas vs Fulton Brown was set for Tuesday but on account of the absence of defendant was postponed to Friday and jury was excused until Thursday. The docket is light there being no criminal cases to try.

The City Pharmacy commenced to move their stock of goods into the new Moreland building on Monday and will now be ready to show to the public a better selected stock of goods than ever before. This enterprising firm is to be found always, catering to the wants of the people. It will be to your interests to call and see the city Pharmacy when in need of any goods in their line.

Pensions for Widows of Presidents

The bill providing an annual pension of \$5,000 each to the widow of former presidents. Benjamin Harrison and Grover Cleveland has been reported favorably to the Senate. This is the bill which, as originally drafted, granted \$10,000 to ex-presidents, as retired commanders in chief of the army and navy and \$5,000 to widows of ex-presidents. As the only living ex-president is one of the liveliest that ever stirred the nations of the world to excited interest—witness his records in the centers of ancient civilizations. Rome and Egypt—the idea of placing him on a retired list of any kind moved many people to mirth.

Even the dignified members of the committee in charge of the bill grasped the humor of the situation and the bill was redrafted so as to omit the pension for Colonel Roosevelt, and to make the provision for the widows apply specifically to Mrs. Cleveland and Mrs. Harrison.

It is only a little over a year since the House of Representatives by unanimous vote granted the franking privilege to Mrs. Cleveland and Mrs. Harrison. This action aroused no criticism. It was regarded as an act of courtesy which the nation was glad to perform in memory of the men who had served as its presidents. The pension bill may excite more comment, but is not likely to arouse very strong adverse criticism.

The people have always felt a kindly interest in the women of the executive's families. No president's wife filled a dearer place in the public affections than did Mrs. Cleveland, who came to the White House invested with the glamour which is the prerogative of brides. In her widowed motherhood she still commands an affectionate interest.

Mrs. Harrison, the dead president's second wife, whom he married after his term of office had expired, naturally never belonged to the people in the same sense as the wife who came as a bride to Washington during her husband's first term, and who has the distinction of being the only president's wife to give birth to a White House baby. Nevertheless, Mrs. Harrison is the widow of the man who as President was commander in chief of the army and navy, and is entitled to the same honor, though she never presided as mistress of the White House.

That marriage is an institution which most men and women uphold in practice as well as theory is borne out in the lives of the Presidents. Of twenty-six men elected to the highest office in the land, only two were unmarried at the time of their election, and Grover Cleveland overcame his bachelor condition soon after entering upon his executive duties. He thus left James Buchanan in undisputed possession of the title, "The Bachelor President." Twenty-one were sustained during the always trying presidential campaigns by the sympathy of their wives, but Mrs. Andrew Jackson, borne down as her husband always believed by the storm of calumny which swept over her at the time, died before inaugural day. So like Jefferson, Van Buren and Arthur, and Jackson entered the White House a widower. Mrs. William H. Harrison, wife of the hero of Tippecanoe, had this in common with Mrs. Jackson—she shared with her husband the pride which any man elected to the presidency must feel, but never presided in the mansion devoted to the chief

executive. She was too ill to undertake the journey to Washington at the time of General Harrison's inauguration. He died just one month after the taking the oath of office, and in sorrow she waited in the old home at North Bend, Ohio, for the coming back of his body.

Zachary Taylor, Abraham Lincoln, James A. Garfield and William McKinley also died during their terms of office, leaving widows with whom the nation mourned. The wives of two Presidents, Benjamin Harrison and John Tyler, died and were buried from the White House. In both instances the husbands married again, Tyler during his term, Harrison after it had expired. Young Mrs. Tyler, like Mrs. Cleveland, came to Washington as the bride of a President, but only eight months of his administration remained and she was never as popular as Mrs. Cleveland. Tyler, Harrison and Theodore Roosevelt make three Presidents who twice entered into the bonds of matrimony.

Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Benjamin Harrison married widows. The slanderous stories which impaired Mrs. Jackson's health grew out of the fact that in her youth she had married Captain Robards. After he had deserted her she was divorced, but political opponents found there was some flaw in the proceedings, and after forty years of happy married life the political opponents of Old Hickory used her first marriage as grounds for attack in the presidential campaign. This is the nearest to anything approaching scandal in the lives of the Presidents, of all who have been exemplary husbands. And in this case the sympathy and respect of the best elements, both of those who have passed judgement since, have been with "Old Hickory" and wife whose fair name was attacked and whose miniature was found over his heart after it had ceased to beat.

In most instances the widows of Presidents have lived very quietly after the death of their husbands. There is a tradition that Mrs. Washington passed the last years of her life in a dark low-roofed room above the chamber in which the first President died and into the room only faithful black servitors were permitted enter. From its dormer windows she could see the tomb on the slope where her dead husband lay. That she was ready to relinquish even this melancholy joy is shown in the letter in which she consented to the burial of her husband in the crypt of the capitol as was once proposed.

This letter and the one written by Mrs. Lincoln asking for a pension were recently rediscovered, as it were, among the dusty tomes which in Washington furnish a wealth of interest to lovers of old time events and records.

Dolly Madison furnished an exception to the general rule of quiet retirement followed by Presidents widows. After Madison's death in 1836 she took up her abode in Washington and lived there like a dowager queen until she died in 1849. During this time her receptions on the Fourth of July and New Year's Day were as largely attended as those at the White House.

Mrs. Cleveland is now traveling abroad and met Colonel and Mrs. Roosevelt recently in Egypt. Her children are in schools in Switzerland. Mrs. Harrison's home is in Indianapolis.—Chicago Record Herald.

Walter M. Hudson of Arlington, Texas was a business caller in Canyon, Friday.

A Very Sad Accident

On Wednesday afternoon about 4:30 occurred one of the saddest accidents that has happened in this city for some time, when Sanford Shotwell, the 12 year old son of S. A. Shotwell, (one of Canyon's business men) lost his life. The circumstances surrounding this sad accident as told by one of his comrades are about as follows: While Sanford was accompanying a son of E. W. Reynolds home from school with the intention of spending the night with young Reynolds, who resides on the west of town. After school, and while these two boys were passing along W. Evelyn street and before reaching the Santa Fe railway tracks they met three other boys at or near the railway crossing, when an incoming Plainview freight train No. 94 was passing, three of the boys had crossed over on the west side of the track and two remained on the east side, Sanford was in the group that crossed over and while they were standing, waiting for the passing freight to go by, Sanford started to jump the train, with the result that he somehow either lost his hold or was over balanced, anyhow he was either thrown or fell midway under the moving train, and his young head decapitated. Thus in a twinkling of an eye, the light and life of another promising young man was lost, never to return. While the bereaved family has the sincere sympathy of their many friends and neighbors, nevertheless it makes a very sad home for them. This should be a warning to other boys that have the habit of jumping on and off moving trains.

Telephone Officers Confer

Horace Gooch and J. E. Nunn managers of the North-West Texas Telephone Company of Amarillo were in Canyon, Monday conferring with the companies local manager here, and the word was passed along the line, that there was now going to be some radical changes to take place soon, as to the night service and the people of Canyon were going to have better and more efficient service rendered them, than heretofore. The News for one will gladly welcome any such good move as to the matter of "service." And when we welcome the installation of good "service" locally we also voice the glad welcome of numerous patrons of the company of the local office here, of course the patrons of the Telephone company here do not anticipate any grave results from the revised night service, such as will produce a shock so great that might cause a nervous prostration or death ensue. It is all now up to the telephone company to do their revision as to the matter of "service."

A. M. McAfee Gets Fellowship

A. M. McAfee of Corsicana, tutor in chemistry at the University of Texas, today received notice of his appointment to the Goldschmidt fellowship in chemistry at the Columbia University of New York City. The fellowship is worth \$600 a year.

A. M. McAfee is a brother of our townsman Charley McAfee. This item is no doubt very gratifying to his many friends in Canyon, as well as to himself, as it takes merit to be able to obtain an appointment to a fellowship in an eastern University. The state of Texas abounds with suitable timber for most any kind of eastern University, large manufacturing or railroad corporation management, all that is necessary for those who are seeking such let their wants known and Texas has the right kind of timber.

WILL LAY CORNERSTONE

May 24th is Date Set for Laying of Cornerstone for West Texas State Normal College.

If something doesn't go amiss there is going to be a big time in Canyon on Tuesday, May 24th. The state Board of Education and the local board of Trustees of the West Texas State Normal College, have been conferring with the local lodge of Masons and with the Commercial Club of this city and they have agreed upon that date as the time for the laying of the cornerstone of the college building which is now nearly completed to the first floor.

The Commercial Club is to have charge of this arrangement for the day's celebration, but side of the actual laying of the stone, the Commercial club is arranging for special rates on the railroads entering the city and will extend public invitations to everybody to attend. They are also arranging for a barbecue and will furnish meats, coffee and bread for the crowd, and it is expected that the people of county, bring baskets filled with cakes and pies and such goodie—goodies as will top off the more staple refreshments which the club is to furnish. It is also arranging for a number of speakers of state wide reputation and they are to occupy a portion of the day, which will not conflict with the work laid out by the Masons. Other entertainments are in contemplation through the committee appointed from the club has not given out the exact program which it will present. The local Masonic lodge will have charge of the actual laying of the stone and the lodge has invited twenty odd Masonic lodges that have been invited, over eighteen have answered that they will be present and that those at Lubbock, north are arranging for special train service and other remote localities are figuring on special car service. All the Masonic lodges in this portion of the state to attend in a body. In addition it has invited those who are high in the ranks of the order to be present and help officiate.

Governor Campbell, Superintendent Bralley, L. Governor, A. B. Davidson and Hon. John Marshall has been invited by the local Board of Trustees, to be present and the local board may extend invitations to other state officials if places on the program for the day can be arranged for them.

Altogether it appears that those who will be in Canyon, on the 24th of next month, will be treated to the biggest thing in the way of celebration which has been given in the Panhandle, in as much it is a great Institution which is to be celebrated.

Test the City Well

The first of the week a preliminary test was made of the city well, the capacity of the pump was small, it was run so as to pump about ninety gallons a minute and it was found not to lower the water in the well at all after a day and night of continuously pumping. The water is of the finest kind, just like snow water.

Union Services

Next Sunday evening at the Methodist church, special program, the first half hour will be song service furnished by the Girls Glee Club of Hereford, followed by regular preaching.

Tom Fritze of Beaumont, Texas is visiting his sister, Mrs. Will Skinner for a short time.